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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, You are the Light of truth for those who know You, the Security of those who love You, the Strength of those who trust You, the Patience of those who wait on You, and the Courage of those who serve You. Fill this Senate Chamber with Your presence. May all that we say and do here today be said and done with an acute awareness of our accountability to You. Help us to ask, "What would the Lord do?" and then, "Lord, what do You want us to do?" Give us long fuses to our tempers and a long view of our vision for the future of America. We invite You to dwell not only in this place but in our minds so that we can think Your thoughts and discover Your solutions. In the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator LOTT of Mississippi, is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Thank you, Mr. President.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. This morning the Senate will resume consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill. Under the previous order, Senator WELLSTONE will immediately be recognized to offer an amendment regarding Department of Defense schools under a 30-minute time agreement. I see he is here, ready to go.

At the expiration of that debate time, the Senate will proceed to vote on or in relation to the Wellstone amendment. Following that vote, there will be 10 minutes for closing remarks

with respect to the Inhofe amendment, regarding the base closure issue, with a vote occurring following that debate. There will then be 10 minutes for closing remarks with respect to the Harkin amendment that was debated last night, which deals with the VA health care issue, followed by a vote in relation to that amendment.

Therefore, three votes will occur beginning, I presume, shortly after 10 o'clock this morning. Following those votes, it is hoped that Members will come to the floor and offer and debate remaining amendments, with the understanding that the bill will be concluded during today's session. I believe that is possible. But once again, it takes cooperation and commitment to agree to reasonable time limits and get to a conclusion on this bill so we can move to a number of other very important issues that we are trying to get cleared, or appropriations bills.

We will make an effort to get short time agreements with regard to the clean needles bill, the reading excellence bill, the drug czar reauthorization bill, perhaps the higher education bill, and any other appropriations bills that we may take up, plus some Executive Calendar items we would like to be able to get done before we go home for the Fourth of July recess, but they are all related to each other. If we get cooperation on the one side, there will be cooperation on the other; if we don't get cooperation and clearance on the bills, the Executive Calendar will have to wait for another week, month, or year.

Also, the Senate can be expected to consider, prior to the Independence Day recess, as I mentioned, the higher education bill. I think we are very close to getting an agreement worked out on that. We can expect votes throughout the day, into the night, and on Friday. There will be at least two votes on Friday, and Senators need to be aware of that.

I yield the floor.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANTORUM). The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2057) to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Inhofe amendment No. 2981, to modify the restrictions on the general authority of the Department of Defense regarding the closure and realignment of military installations, and to express the sense of the Congress on further rounds of such closures and realignments.

Harkin/Wellstone amendment No. 2982, to authorize a transfer of funds from the Department of Defense to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Minnesota is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. THURMOND. I congratulate Senator WELLSTONE for being willing to come down this early to offer an amendment.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank my colleague from South Carolina.

Mr. President, I wonder whether I could ask my colleagues for 5 minutes to speak as in morning business to quickly introduce a bill before going to my 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. WELLSTONE pertaining to the introduction of S. 2215 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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